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OF THE I.A.R.F.

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The picture on the cover shows the Cross Street Chapel, Manchester (G.B.).

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ON OUR WAY TO DAVOS 1961

We are now on our way to Davos 1961. By the time this Digest comes out, all readers will have received the leaflet giving introduction to the theme of our triennial congress and mentioning the subjects to be treated in the lectures and panel-discussions, as well as some indication about accommodation and post congress-tours. As a background to the program they will have imagined the beautiful scenery against which the I.A.R.F.-congress will take place in Davos.

In Chicago in 1958 the theme was: "Today's Religions Can Meet The World's Needs Today". That theme brought together representatives from many countries and of very different religious backgrounds, in a feeling of common responsibility for the world and for each other. Three undeniable facts, I think, impressed themselves on the minds of those who attended that conference: (1) The congress at Davos can be seen as a continuation of the discussrooted world, spiritual powers which can reach millions and millions of people, not on the surface of their lives, but deep in their souls. (2) There are remarkable moral forces hidden in each one of these religions. (3) There is a common sense of mutual responsibility and understanding in the moral sphere and even here and there in the religious one.

The congress at Davos can be seen as a continuation of the discussions begun in Chicago. This time we face one of the most baffling problems in the world of today: the disunity in the world at various

levels, due to deeply rooted differences in history, different functions in the world today, different cultures and different conceptions of the relations between God, the World and Man. Nevertheless all great religions know of the essential one-ness of mankind before God and, as never before, we are called upon te feel this one-ness, to study it, to practice it and to witness to it together. This one-ness can perhaps not manifest itself in a common faith, but it can be manifest in a common search and service, „each believer finding inspiration and guidance in his own faith, his own tradition and his own hopes", as the leaflet says.

We cannot hope to solve any of the exasperating questions raised in the lectures and panel-discussions in Davos. We cannot even hope to understand them in full. But what we can and may hope for is a growing awareness of them in ourselves, a deeper understanding of the soul-saving and soul-inspiring significance of religious traditions, and a new dedication of our own lives to them.
Turning the pages of this Digest you will see three articles devoted to church-architecture. They remind us that in East and West, in villages and in towns, locally there are places where people can unite for worship, inspiration and guidance. Without these churches congresses are of small value, with them they can bring fruit beyond expectation.

J. W. W.

I.A.R.F. CONGRESS

DAVOS, SWITZERLAND, AUGUST 8th-13th, 1961.
THE UNITY OF MANKIND IN OUR DIVIDED WORLD.

Program Highlights
In four public meetings the following subjects will be introduced:

1. Theme talk: "Living in a Divided World".
2. "Our Approach to World Community"
3. "How do Africa and Asia see the West"
4. "How the West sees Africa and Asia"

The main lectures will be delivered in the morning sessions. After the main lectures there will be a break and then the Congress will split up in five simultaneous panel discussion groups. The following panels are being prepared:

1. "Food and Population"
2. "The Rising Tide of New Nationalism"
3. "Race and Colour"
4. "What is happening to the Family Today"
5. "Spiritual Values and Technology"

The afternoons will be used for sightseeing and special meetings, the evenings to cultural activities, a concert, a film, perhaps a group of Indian dancers, and folklore.

Accommodation

Hotel prices vary from Sw.frs. 87. — to Sw.frs. 178.80 (£ 9.10.— to £ 19.10.—; $ 26.50 to $ 55.—) without bath; Sw.frs. 129.— to Sw.frs. 237.— (£ 14.—.— to £ 25.10.—; $ 39.— to $ 72.—) with bath, everything included (three meals, service and taxes), for the six days of the Congress. For young people youth hostel accommodation can be provided, but this must also be applied for beforehand.

Congress fee

Sw.frs. 20.—, £ 2.—.— and $ 5.— everything included (social activities, etc.)

Post Congress Tours

After the Congress several 3—8 days trips in Switzerland will be organised. Further details will be given at a later date.

Albert Schweitzer College

The Albert Schweitzer College is preparing in its buildings a Seminar on „Science („Wissenschaft") and Technology" from July 28th-August 6th, 1961, in which 60-80 people can participate. For further information apply to the Albert Schweitzer College, CHURWALDEN (GR), Switzerland.

Ir. G. Treep

A FEW NOTES ON CHURCH BUILDING IN HOLLAND

The question of whether our church building is good or bad can only be asked when we are conscious of the freedom of our choice. We know there are many forces at work in the world which either stimulate or hinder our search for good architectural style.

Because of the many currents in Protestantism, a force which to one denomination may give a positive guide to faith may be negative to an other.

A strict, dogmatic approach harmonizes with a strong, angular, "symmetric" architecture, for example. But the same form of architecture would not harmonize with, and even could be an impediment to, the approach of a religious group which was aware of the force of "holy doubt".

Our ancestors have left us many valuable examples of church building, but we, who must live in a constantly changing world and are aware of forces previously unknown, seek our own means of expression. The fact that nothing but an oak will grow from an acorn can only strengthen our desire for our own liberal vision to make itself apparent in the style and function of our churches.

Everything in nature strives for outward expression of its inner being. The showing of "self" in our religious life by means of architecture raises many problems. A Dutch theologian has stated that the building of churches is in the first place a theological, and only in the second place an aesthetic activity. Is it the liberal accent which brings the truth of these words into question, since they separate two things which should not be separated?

It is, in my opinion, not aestheticism which determines the value of things, but our ability to see through to the intelligent meaning things have for us.

Good architecture is not a question of aestheticism but of functionalism. Nobody can determine what beauty is, since it is a value which we confer and which — with the times — is constantly subject to change.

Church building is certainly not an aesthetic question, and when it

is approached as such, usually results in following the mode too much to be representative of religious values. We are convinced that the search for the meaning of things (insofar as it is for us intelligible) results in good, responsible style.
By aiming at functionalism we can guard against our individualistic leanings predominating and causing the high commission to become confused.
By losing sight of function in order to achieve "success", the architect is in danger of slipping from art into "kitsch", which is intolerable in a church .
Kellerer, in his book "Much ado about Kitsch", has defined "kitsch" as: "the conventional expression of dogmatized instincts". How often are we not in danger of degenerating into kitsch, either as followers of ultra-modern ideas or as conservative followers of old styles? Blind following of present or old styles strands both groups on aesthetic values that are meaningless.
Good style presupposes an undogmatic instinct and a form based on selfexpression and not on convention.
As a postulate (unverified hypothesis) for architecture, I should like to present: "the object for architecture serves the striving for the perfection of life and is an object of architecture if the spatial arrangement of all known forces harmoniously reveals the, to us comprehensible, essence of things".
When the above is accepted, then one can readily understand the architect's simple question: What happens in a church? The answer is: the congregation gathers there, not for one, but for many purposes. In this article we can confine ourselves to services of worship, because in these fundamental differences become apparent. Gatherings for other purposes are less likely to differ, and activities are developed more by the individual religious community.
It is a liberal idea to see the church as more than an organization of people, and yet not to believe that it has to be a divine institution (as the Roman Catholics do). What makes the church a church is its congregation. The church is the home of the congregation. This particular character must be present internally as well as externally. From outside, the building must express the dignity, the liberation and the invitation of the divine message. The inside must provide space for absorbing the different aspects of this message. Meeting on account of and based upon the word of God should in the first instance find expression in the design, the furnishing and the "silent" preaching of the actual building.
In a building program for a liberal (Remonstrant) church in Holland it was stressed rightly that there must be a relation between the church's liturgy and its building. Usually "liturgy" means the form of church service. However, we are wise to take as our starting point the New Testament witness and not the present or former

tradition. In the New Testament the meaning of "leitourgia" is: service rendered to and in the world for Gods sake. Liturgy therefore is not an introverted, but an extroverted movement. In order to prepare and strengthen people for this service, the church is called upon to gather round the Word, the witness to Godly deliverance. In the service of worship in the Remonstrant Brotherhood, evangelism through the medium of Bible reading, prayer, hymns and sermons, plays a more important part than witness through the medium of sacraments. All related activities are treated as components of the one service, none of them being more "liturgical" than the other. The whole service is in a restricted sense, liturgical.

Architecturally, this conviction combined with the Protestant tradition of the priesthood of all the faithful, results in striving for one enveloping, undivided church-area. As a consequence of this conviction comes the rejection of any thought suggesting a localisation of that which is Holy. The "Holy" can only be there when the congregation is assembled. The architect's most important task is to see to it that as little hindrance as possible is put in the way of the receipt of the gift of grace.

The various objects which aid in ministry are only a medium and should of themselves attract as little attention as possible. They therefore demand the utmost care architecturally. The frequency of celebrations and also the particular character which is ascribed to the Lord's Supper must determine the position and shape of the communion table and whether it should be fixed or movable. The same applies to the christening font. If the service of worship is the most frequent feature, central placing of the pulpit will be most suitable. When the various activities are thus placed in the centre of attention and attention is also given to the right ordening of all activity, the dedicated architect is greatly aided in his search for a true style. When serving a living congregation he cannot do without this aid, since his search is directed towards the meaning of things. Theological disputes over the relative importance of pulpit, communion table and baptismal font have led to unsolvable architectural problems in connection with the building of the more orthodox churches in the Netherlands. No architect succeeds in placing equally well three such different features in one single liturgical centre. The forced arrangements arising from this difficulty result in the shifting — in liberal opinion — of accent from activities to objects.

When we trace the history of church building, we see how, during the course of centuries, the separation between priests and parishioners has grown greater, culminating in choirs of priests being enclosed at the high altar by choir screens.

While we now see a trend in the building of Roman Catholic churches which lessens the separation between priests and parishioners, and experiments are even being made in conducting Mass with the

priest facing the congregation, we also see in the Netherlands, in the Dutch Reformed Church a remarkable endeavour to depart from the one and undivided church-area and, by setting up a liturgical centre, a separate baptismal chapel and even a special communion chapel, to make the separation greater.
It seems to me more in keeping with the liberal conviction to aspire to the one, undivided space, where the contact or exchange between congregation and minister can be strengthened and where the congregation can be so placed as to strengthen the bond between the members themselves. This can be done, e.g. by grouping the congregation in a semi- or threequarter circle round the pulpit. Such an arrangement places more importance on the congregation than the right-angle seating, one behind the other, which is used in a movie or classroom, and which is in my opinion more suitable for a juvenile crowd. After all, it is the congregation which makes the church a church.
In conclusion, a few remarks and sketches in explanation of the foregoing sentences.

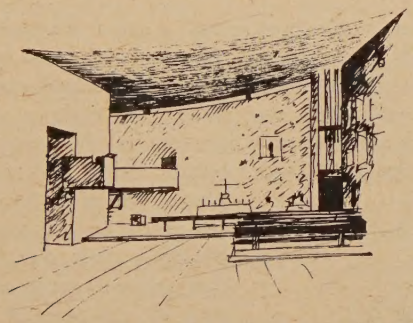

Fig. 1

A good illustration of the architect's dedication is the Roman Catholic pilgrim's chapel at Ronchamp in France which was designed by Le Corbusier. Though a Protestant, Le Corbusier shows himself

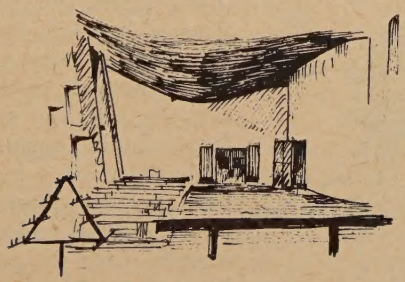

Fig. 1

quite capable af accepting this commission and even creating a masterpiece. Inside as well as outside it absolutely answers the purpose of

a pilgrim's chapel. The typical R.C. idea of localising the Holy has received an ideal expression in the hollow shape of the roof, which hovers over the sanctuary, ready to receive like an open hand. (picture 1)

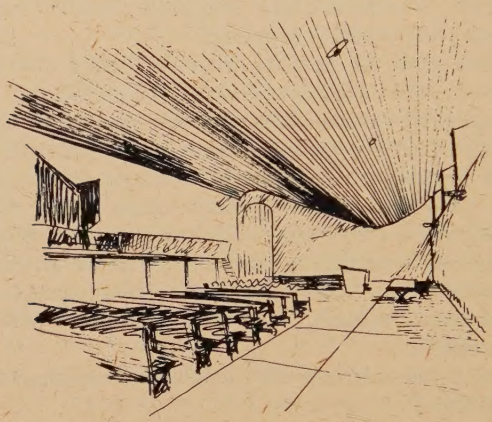

Fig. 2

Such a creation is of great influence, and as usual much of this form-language is copied. It is a curious fact that the form of this roof was copied by a Dutch Reformed Church in Holland, and one feels that here the outward form was taken over without true understanding of the deeper meaning inherent in this particular form (design 2). The Protestant faith does not glorify places where a "miracle" has happened, and consequently this building gives one the feeling that architecturally an opportunity to stimulate a Protestant faith has been missed.

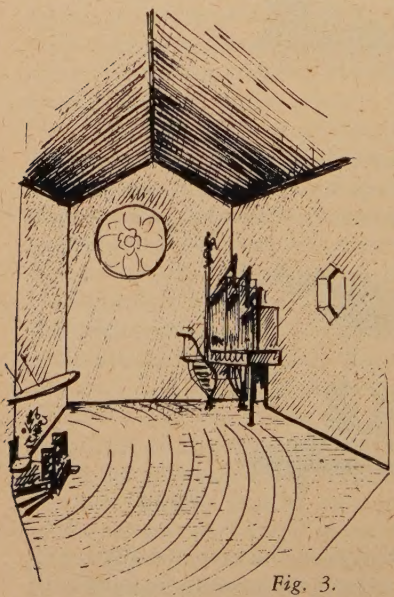

Fig. 3.

The last picture shows the floor-plan of a small Remonstrant church where the congregation is seated in a half circle around the pulpit, and where, according to the demands of the celebration, the seats can be arranged for the Lord's Supper, or for the consecration of a marriage, or for a play or a concert. The platform is placed under the rose-window. Only the pulpit has a fixed place. All other furniture can be moved around as need dictates.

Josiah R. Bartlett

President Star King School for the Ministry, Berkeley, Calif.

NOTES ON CHURCH ARCHITECTURE

Next Sunday I am to preach at a nearby Unitarian fellowship. The program chairman (they prefer "program" to "worship" because the latter sounds too "orthodox") gives me complete freedom, but asks: "How shall we get the people to stop talking and become reverent, when it is time for the service to begin".

I reply: "Wy not *let* them talk? In fact, why not enjoy your coffee hour before the service, instead of afterwards, when people must gulp down their coffee in a hurry, and dash off to pick up their children? I think the coffee-hour is a spiritual experience: people will be reverent enough, once their need for fellowship is recognized and given a genuine place in your program".

He agrees with me and is much relieved.

This incident is typical, and full of significance for a discussion of church architecture in the region I know best. This "fellowship" is one of more than 300 new Unitarian societies which have come into being in the last decade — almost half our societies in America are now fellowships! Typically, these are small (15-50 families) groups, almost all brand-new Unitarians. They are lay-led, enthousiastic, creative; but also inexperienced, and in a negatively rebellious stage of religion, opposed to whatever suggests the "orthodoxy" that oppressed their members in their youth. They are extremely significant because, by circumstances and also by choice, they are not bound by custom, but serve as pilot-plants for liberal religion in our post-war era.

What kind of people are they? Middle-class professional people, predominantly: not wealthy, but having well above the average income. They take ideas seriously, and are seeking the good (not merely the glittering) things of life; politically liberal; the "egghead" type. They have many children, and for the most part they have but recently moved to California. This particular fellowship has grown to the point where they have had to rent space for church school classes in three separate locations. Like a good many others, they are planning to build, and, for their services, have meanwhile bought a small, old, militantly plain frame church building, which used to belong to the Baptists. They did what they could, inside, to make it attractive. Outside, one dark night, they removed the wooden cross (or "plus sign" as one small child called it in his *tabula rasa* liberal innocence).

Unitarian Church, Bellevue, Wash

They have begun a building fund, and engaged a popular local architect (not a Unitarian) who works in the contemporary mode, to help them plan their "dream church" of tomorrow.

I wish, presently, to return to the special, liberal aspect of this congregation. But first, one must observe that it is in other respects typical of thousands of new church groups which, taken with the growth of older ones, are responsible for the greatest church building boom in the history of America. No question but that church architecture is active — the only question is, will it be good or bad?

Observe, first, that these people are part of a mobile urban population. 25% of all American families move their residence every year! This mobility implies many things, but for church architecture, it certainly implies that these people, when they build churches, will not do so as a community. They are, rather, geographically rootless persons seeking community. One cannot imagine them building churches which will be, symbolically, the centers of organic communities, as mediaeval cathedrals or parish churches were, as the New England meeting houses were, or even *(diminuend)* as the large downtown city churches of yesterday's urban America tried to be.

This fact, plus the high cost of building, insures that church buildings will not be monuments. They may well become (and a considerable number of them are showing signs of this) haven of community life for the members of various sects as these drift from town to town. There is question whether churches should not, by choice, be built not "for the ages" but simply for a few decades: flexible, disposable as their neighborhoods change and shift.

Today's church building, obviously, must have a place for worship, church school classes and social gatherings and it must be economically built. City ordinances compel it, also, to provide a certain amount of parking space for automobiles. But beyond this, there is little agreement on what it is to *do* or *be;* what it is to express. Liturgical or dogmatic churches have the advantage of being definite here: some of the best work one sees is erected by the Lutherans, the Jews, Episcopalians, and — in our region — the Mormons. Most, unfortunately, waver between the "old time religion" (streamlined colonial, gothic, California Spanish) and a competitive up-to-dateness looking exactly like the surrounding schools, medical offices or fire-stations, except for a steeple shrunk to a thumb tack, or a cross weirdly distorted into an "interesting" element. Church buildings mostly, like most religion, are dull and irrelevant.

There are many reasons for this, but perhaps at bottom is simply the continuing abyss between religion and art. If one begins with the architect, he, like most sensitive artists, is not at home in the church today. When designing a church, though he does his best to express the people's aspirations, he does so as an outsider. This is not to say architects don't meditate on deep themes: just so! The

values and questions and answers they wish to express from within themselves are seldom inspired by or phrased in the terms of organized religion and its symbols. What we must expect, then, is an architecture of second-hand faith, which is usually technically competent, often having aspects of real beauty, but seldom inspired.

There are also important reasons for the flight of art from religion, arising from the nature of the churches and their faith. I note a few. The American Calvinist strain of Protestantism has in its heart a strong manichean, anti-aesthetic element. Art is suspect because it is sensuous. Life is to be mastered, not enjoyed. Hence the very spring of artistry is blocked.

Catholicism, never having taken so black a view of human nature or the good things of life, and with its inexhaustible realm of symbols, is in a happy situation — provided the artist will accept the faith, and suffer an authoritarianism which ultimately reduces his expression to the status of illustration. The latest large religious art show in our area was 90% Catholic. The other 10% was mostly Jewish: Judaism, though flavoured by a certain austerity, has a combination of intellectual freedom, rich tradition, and acceptance of life, which result in a magnificent artistic flowering when politics permit its art to be more than an interior one.

What about liberal religious art? Here I would go back to my typical fellowship to whom I preach next Sunday. One would expect them to be a joy and inspiration to the artist. They are "eggheads" — a term of reproach here in America, where the deprecation of the intellect is rightly the despair of Europeans. I recall Dante's words, that the broadest characterization of the souls in his Inferno is, that they are those who have lost "il ben dello intelleto". I for one rejoice that liberal religion insists with Schweitzer that thinking, in itself, is religious. Here is a faith that welcomes thoughtful professional persons, and notably the architect.

There are signs that America is growing up a little. A recent local newspaper column, in uneasy jest, contracted the "I" people (Intellectuals) with the "Non-I", saying that the former are "Unitarians or having no formal church affiliation" and continuing:

> "Mr. and Mrs. I are faithful to their spouses, swim and ski, listen to hi-fi or FM radio, garden as a hobby, do their own decorating, have a free choice in reading matter, and never hesitate to buy paperback books, see foreign films and attend the opera, ballet, or legitimate theater... spend their money on paintings, country cabins... They drink Bristol Cream sherry and enjoy Pinot Chardonnay with their coq au vin. Their party 'entertainment' is conversation". (Millie, San Francisco *Chronicle 2.21'60).*

In other words, though this is a caricature, these are people who have a glad acceptance of life, are concerned about its social and cultural values, and cherish ideas. When these people form a religious fellowship, one would expect them to make beauty along with truth and goodness, the first order of business.

Alas! Too often it is not so. Our Unitarian fellowships (more than our churches) are curiously tolerant of ugliness, oddly indifferent to beauty — far beyond what makeshift, usually rented, quarters impose on them? Why?

Primarily I think because we are in negative bondage to the "orthodoxy" we have left. Our people are still so deeply and emotionally tangled up in the churches they have left behind them, and the symbols of the old faith, that they are only just beginning to be free, as art must be free. In a sense this is true of American Unitarianism, or religious liberalism, generally: it has been content with an attenuated low-church non-conformist liturgy and, for all its theological "radicalism" has not created much that is new. It has made its contribution, rather, in a flexible treatment of established forms.

But I think we have come to the end of an old era already into a new one. This is certainly true liturgically. For one thing, our ministers have become so utterly unhappy with the several existing "Ministers' Handbooks" of services (baptism, weddings, etc.) that they are, as a group, systematically preparing a completely new one. Our congregations have come to the end of the road of liturgical attenuation. They are almost ready to admit, like my fellowship program directorfriend, that in the confused life we lead today, a weekly cup of coffee with a few other persons who are trying to stand for the things of the spirit, is an authentic spiritual experience, not to be truncated and hushed up in the name of a vestigial "reverence". One can see the same thing in the matter of hymns. Most ministers find 75% of those in our present (1935) hymnal unusable. The Fellowship Office, not having a commitment to the past, published a Fellowship Hymnal which omitted the 75% and added some good newer service material. Now we are preparing a new hymnal — and the commission in charge is sharply aware that we "stand between two worlds" — of forms that no longer express the content of our faith, and forms that, as yet, our faith has not yet created. Actually, I think we shall be agreeably surprised to see how many good new materials have appeared, but like little green shoots among the dead leaves of last autumn, gone unnoticed.

I could give other illustrations: for example, the rapidly spreading practice of having an "artist of the month" display his works in our churches; of imaginative new forms of worship that get beyond the merely novel.

But to return to architecture. Here too we are between two eras. Frank Lloyd Wright, in his whole life, had exactly two commissions

from liberal congregations. Richard Neutra, another architect of world fame who is a religious liberal, to my knowledge has had none so far. Bernard Maybeck, esteemed by Californians as of a stature like Wright's, was a founder of our Berkeley Unitarian Church: he was never invited to design a church for us.

There is a new day and a new generation however. Sometimes, as our congregations plan buildings today, they have the problem that half a dozen fine young architects are among their membership.

Can we answer, for liberals, the quest on: What is a church building to do and to be? Is there a "liberal" shape or style? One cannot say of any style of building that it is "religious" in itself, though I think the artist, Mark Tobey, well said not long ago:

> "An artist today must find his expression closely linked to his individual experience or else follow in the old grooves resulting in lifeless forms. At a time when experimentation expresses itself in all froms of life, search becomes the only valid expression of the spirit. Later generations will have the time and power to crystallize his efforts into a definite period".

Abstract art appeals to me because it permits one to supply, in large measure, one's own content. Yet I note, favorably, that artists of our region are ceasing to be "purely" abstract. They are reintroducing content and recognizable theme, beyond pure form or private symbolism. Perhaps this too indicates we have almost come to terms with our past and our time, and are ready for affirmations.

No, liberals have not yet made it clear what a church building is to be or do. Certain things are becoming clear however. Our church building is surely not to be constructed by its past — to be, let us say, a streamlined meeting-house. Nor, despite the mannerisms of the modernesque (A-frame roofs, or the new fad for grillwork) is it to out-do in "modern-ness" the secular buildings around it.

One of our younger architects has well stressed the importance, above all, of its integrity: it is what it is, without sham or apology. What will be that IDEA which it expresses? That of a place which helps people become persons. This may require nothing more than a place, set a little apart physically, set apart much more by its quality, wherein fellow-spirits can meet in various ways and relationships to upbuild one another and share the resources of themselves, their heritage, and their community. It will do this in a form, and with materials, related by artistic logic to the location, related also to a tradition appropriated, not binding; ordered by an imagination free of interpret and guide the Now. It will be a building which, by what it is, inspires most deeply those who have eyes to see, yet has power to work its influence even upon those whose eyes are not yet open.

Kenneth S. Taylor A.R.I.B.A.

NOTES ON RECENT CHURCH BUILDING IN ENGLAND

I have been asked to contribute some notes on recent church building in England, more particulary in respect of those congregations of our Unitarian and Free Religious Fellowship.

The notes of J. R. Bartlett, which precede these, give an interesting and challenging picture of the position in America. Whilst there are some aspects of the subject which are common to both countries the situation here is very different. A brief reference to our position may therefore be of interest.

Unlike America we in the British Isles have not yet experienced the steady increase in church membership which has developed there since the war, an increase which demands a large programme of church building. Here, our average church membership remains small and, in spite of signs of growing interest from people having no previous connection with our movement, it is most unlikely that we shall be faced with a big demand for new churches in the near future. Finances are severely limited and many of our congregations find it difficult to meet the normal demands made upon them in running and maintaining their premises. In most cases the undertaking of any radical improvements or rebuilding schemes is not a practical possibility.

The size of existing premises is frequently far in excess of present needs having been built in the days of larger congregations. These buildings were erected with no appreciation of the heavy responsibility which would fall on succeeding generations due to the drastic increase in the cost of labour and materials. Thus a burden has been placed on many church committees which has made it almost impossible for them to keep their properties in a sound state of repair.

This is of course not a problem peculiar to us but it does, to a large

extent, account for the delapidated state of some of our church premises to-day.

The war years made matters worse and in some cases repairs, which would in normal times have been considered as essential, have been neglected and have grown beyond the funds available. In addition, as a result of bombing a large number of the churches, mostly in the urban areas of the larger towns and cities, received such damage as rendered them beyond repair. To these congregations the loss of their church came as a heavy blow, but to some perhaps it provided an opportunity for the erection of new premises more in keeping with the size of the congregation and, it is hoped, more easily maintained in the future.

For some years after the war, when all building was subject to a Government licence, no rebuilding of churches was possible, other needs being paramount. In recent years, since a licence was no longer necessary, the various denominations as a whole have pushed ahead with needed reconstruction. Indeed it has been suggested that this is one of the great church building periods. Many, if not most of the recently built churches are not on the scale of former days, though the Anglicans and the Catholics have been responsible for a number of projects of some size and cost.

This renewed activity in church building has been partly to fill the gaps created by the destruction of the war, but also to meet the needs of extensive areas of new housing in urban districts and the New Towns.

The sudden increase in church building has called for rethinking within the denominations as to their particular requirements within the framework of present day needs. With this end in view a conference was held in May, 1959, attended by representatives of ten European countries and the U.S.A. This conference was held at the Ecumenical Institute of the World Council of Churches, Bossey, Geneva, and devoted a week's study to the problems of contemporary church design. The delegates worked out a thirteen point statement on architecture in relation to the needs of the churches. This statement received wide international publicity and became known as the Bossey Statement. Later, in March of this year, a two day conference, under the auspices of "Christian Teamwork", was held in London. It was attended by some eighty architects and clergymen representing most denominations outside Roman Catholicism and discussed the art of church building against the general background provided by the Bossey Statement. The fact that Great Britain was the first country to take the initiative in organizing a follow-up conference is evidence of the awareness, both in the architectural profession and in the Churches, that much concentrated thought and investigation are required if new churches, of whatever denomi-

nation, shall be in keeping with the requirements of a constantly changing outlook.

It has to be admitted that the contribution of this country in the field of contemporary church architecture has so far been disappointing and has certainly lagged far behind that of school design, for which we have a justified reputation.

Though many of the factors which influence the design of the orthodox churches, namely ceremonial and liturgy, do not affect us in our freer forms of worship. I believe that we also, as a body, could wisely devote some thought to this matter. Is it not possible for us to form a clearer conception of what is most in keeping with our particular requirements and to design our new churches more in line with contemporary thought and needs?

There are I believe signs that our services are becoming less tied to liturgical forms and it may be that a modern equivalent of the „meeting house" will be found to be most suitable for the changing mode of worship. In common with American experience, but perhaps to a lesser degree at present, those people who are being attracted to our services have little use for anything suggestive of ecclesiasticism either in the form of worship or the building in which it takes place. Yet the building must have a character in keeping with its spiritual purpose. This is the problem which faces our designers today and its solution is by no means easy.

It must I think be admitted that many, perhaps the majority, of our older churches were built during a period of poor aesthetic appreciation. They seem to have been designed with little perception of what was suitable, being pretentious and dull. Sometimes the fabric was not displeasing in itself but was then, or at later periods, marred by embellishments and furnishing of poor design and quality; an ornate communion table in an otherwise simple setting; or a florid memorial straight in the congregation's line of vision, to say nothing of stained glass of mediocre quality darkening an otherwise adequately lit building!

There are however signs that at least some of those responsible for the fabrics of our churches are becoming more aware of their reponsibilities in this direction, but the way of the reformer is hard and the reluctance to alter, even for the better, considerable.

Now something of our new churches. To what extent have we succeeded in our rebuilding ventures in recent years and in our efforts to repair the damages of the War? Ten completely new churches have been built, mostly with a Hall or Sunday School adjoining. In addition a further ten have been restored after serious damage. Sometimes the school or hall only were damaged beyond repair. Six of these have been rebuilt and seven restored.

In view of the fact that in all cases the rebuilding has only been made possible by the aid of War Damage Compensation, and this

is very strictly limited in amount, it is not surprising that none of the new churches is large or of more than simple design. The rebuilt churches are at Cross Street, Manchester; Croydon, Islington and Lewisham, all in the London area; Plymouth, Portsmouth, St. Helens, Stand and Yarmouth.

Cross Street Chapel is a fine example of restrained modern work, designed in accordance with present day needs. It is situated on an important site in the centre of Manchester and is a dignified conception of a modern "Meeting House", free from unnecessary or fussy detail and relying on good proportion and simple lines to make their effect.

Stand Chapel, replacing a 17th century building, is much smaller than Cross Street but is also of the meeting house type. Here the character is that of a modern version of the New England meeting house with white interior walls, round headed windows and a small steeple. It is a pleasant example of its kind but it pays no heed to the contemporary trends in design, being "backward" rather than "forward" looking. One is tempted to wonder whether it may not be a mistake in these days to design in an idiom of a past age and land.

Hitherto there had been some prejudice on the part of the public in this country to what, for want of a better term, has become known as contemporary design. This prejudice shows signs of wakening and the two new churches at Plymouth and Croydon, both in the more contemporary mood, have been warmly approved by many. The Plymouth church is considered by some to be a particularly pleasing scheme, not too strongly revolutionary in conception perhaps but distinctly of its own day.

The new church at Croydon is also contemporary in feeling and does little to satisfy those who still prefer the traditional approach. It has been built on a new and more open site and this has allowed the designer more scope than is often the case in built up areas. The result is a pleasantly light and spacious building, lit by a large window extending nearly the whole of one side. The furnishing and fittings are of a high order, and colour has been used very effectively.

Where the site was not large enough or, more frequently, where the funds available were inadequate, it has not always been possible to build a Hall or School as well a Church. Unity Church at Islington and the one at Portsmouth are examples of this. At Portsmouth, a flat for the minister has been incorporated in the scheme, a very desirable addition where it can be managed. At Islington the previous church, which was a large one of the pseudo Gothic variety, was completely destroyed. The site of this church was sold and the proceeds made a substantial contribution towards the cost of the dual purpose building now erected on the site of the old Hall. Here, the "chancel"

with its cummunion table, reading desk and so forth can be screened off by means of sliding doors when the building is required for secular use during the week. There is also a gallery at the back which can seat additional congregation when necessary but which can also be screened off for use as a Committee or Club Room.

At Lewisham in the South of London a large Church Hall was built some years before the war. There was a small Hall adjoining and space left on the site for a church at some later date. The Hall was extensively damaged but has been restored. Being too large and unsuitable as a place of worship, however, services have been held in the smaller Hall. Even this was not found to be entirely satisfactory and alterations are now in progress to make it more suitable as a place of worship pending the hoped-for growth of the congregation and the building of a proper church on the available land.

Another of the churches which was destroyed was Brixton. For some years the congregation has been meeting in a temporary building, a converted army hut. Plans are now almost complete for a new Church and Hall and it is hoped that work on these will be able to be proceeded within the not too distant future. This new church will be modest in size, designed to seat about one hundred and twenty. The site, being long and narrow, does not allow for a typical meeting house plan, particularly as ample space has to be provided for parking cars. It is however intended that it shall be of that form so far as is possible.

Such is a brief summary of our rebuilding achievements in recent years. It needs hardly be said that even this fairly modest result has meant the expenditure of much thought and resourcefulness on the part of many devoted members. I believe it is true that visitors to our services are influenced by the buildings they enter more than is often realised and that wereas no "building" alone can make a "church", a spiritual fellowship will grow more readily and strongly in surroundings which are in tune with our forward looking faith.

THE TENTH INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS ON THE HISTORY OF RELIGIONS

The small University town of Marburg, Germany, has had a very busy time. From September 11-17 the International Association for the History of Religions held its tenth quinquennial congress there. For several reasons this congress is worth mentioning:

1) The International Association for the History of Religions is a rather important organisation. Its aim is to stimulate the study of the History of Religions. This can only be done if most countries of the world are represented by a national group in the Association. We are very happy to say that for some years groups from the East have joined their Western colleagues. We have member groups in Belgium, England, France, Germany, Holland, Hungary, India, Israël, Italy, Japan, Korea, Norway, Sweden and the United States of America.

2) It will be clear from this list that scholars from all living religions and specialists on all ancient religions are united by the I.A.H.R. This can only be done if they have one common concern. Although there are methodological differences in approach between Eastern and Western scholars, they all want to promote the history of religions. So the Association is not connected with a church, or even with one religion; it wants to develop scientific work in all fields of the History of Religions.

3) Though most of the work is done by the international groups, it is always a great experience to have many scholars from all countries meet together. In Marburg there were more than 500 scholars from 29 countries. They discussed their problems in seven sections. The general theme of the congress was "Origin and Eschatology", a most interesting subject, which was dealt with in 140 lectures in the sections and in 8 general lectures.

4) The congress was opened in the great hall of the famous castle, where many years ago Luther and Zwingli met and discussed their theological problems. During the opening ceremony Professor

Adams from Harvard University and two others received a doctorate *honoris causa* from the University of Marburg.

5) The German Organizing Committee with its officers, Professor Heiler (chairman) and Professor Annemarie Schimmel (secretary), can be very proud of its magnificent work. All technical problems were solved. During the congress a trip was organized to the famous city of Fulda. After the congress a study tour was made to many interesting places in Germany.

6) The I.A.H.R. has become a world-wide Association, which was clearly shown by the presence of H.I.H. Prince Mikasa from Japan, and by a message from the President of India. In addition, the delegates from America and from the East proved the fact that the efforts to extend the Association have been successful.

7) A congress always gives a good opportunity to have discussions on various problems. Professor Widengren from Uppsala, Sweden, has succeeded the late Professor Pettazzoni from Rome as President of the Association. Representatives from India and Korea were nominated as members of the Executive Board. Professor Bleeker from Holland continues his work as General Secretary.

8) Much work has also been done to secure the future of the I.A.H.R. It was decided to accept the invitation to hold the eleventh congress in India in 1963. This will be the second congress in the East, one having been held in Tokyo in 1958. In 1965 the twelfth congress will be held in the United States of America.

9) The proceeding of the Marburg congress, consisting of a survey of the congress and summaries of all the lectures will be published in Germany under the supervision of Professor Heiler.

10) The journal of The Association, "Numen", will be continued under a new editor-in-chief, Professor Bleeker, who succeeds Professor Pettazzoni. The suplements to Numen will also be published under his supervision. The issues of the Bibliography will appear regularly.

11) The closing ceremony brought an experiment: Professor Bleeker gave a lecture on "The future task of the History of Religions". Many participants took part in a discussion about the problems involved. One could clearly see the differences of opinion between the scholars but also their common concern to serve the study of

the History of Religions. The experiment may be considered a success and will be continued in future years.

A report about a congress never gives a good impression. One should be present to see and hear. But even from this short article it may be concluded that the tenth International Congress for the History of Religions has been a most inspiring and stimulating event in the history of our Association. We have come back from Germany with many pleasant memories and we look forward to meeting again in India in 1963

L. J. R. Ort,
Assistant to the General Secretary of the I.A.H.R.

THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION

On Saturday afternoon at 4 P.M. a group of people of all races and religions are in the habit of meeting in small groups near the Durban Central Goal, South Africa, for the purpose of praying for those in prison and for the country. Others who are not able to be present in the flesh join their prayers through the use of this prayer. The readers may like to know of this and to share this short vigil of prayer. The prayer is published below.

A Prayer for our Country

O ruler of the destinies of men and nations, we thank Thee that Thou art on the throne of the universe.
We thank Thee that no matter how dark the clouds above us may seem, Thy watchful care is over all Thy children.

We thank Thee that all things work together for good for those who love and serve Thee.

We confess our share in the sins of our people, and ask that Thou wilt cleanse our hearts and the hearts of all who dwell within this land of ours.

Deliver us we pray Thee from our sins:
From the refusal to recognise Thine image in our neighbour, from unwillingness to treat all men as our brothers.

From over-carefulness for our own comfort and security, from neglect of the happiness and well-being of others.

From remembrance of the evil deeds of others.

From forgetfulness of our own need for forgiveness. From seeking our own way.
From unwillingness to seek Thy way and to walk in it.

Almighty God, who didst make of one blood all nations upon earth, that they might know and love and serve Thee: we pray for the peoples of this land.

We pray for all who exercise authority over their fellow men; that they may learn of Thee wisdom and understanding, patience and humility.

We pray for all who suffer from the violence and injustice of their fellow men; that they may learn of Thee the power to forgive injuries, the strength to endure hardship and pain.

We pray for all who are separated by prison bars from those they love: that they may not be separated from Thee.

We pray for all who are seeking to work for justice and freedom, peace and goodwill, that they may be strengthened in all purposes.

We pray for all who are indifferent to the claims of justice and to the needs of our peoples; that their eyes may be opened to see this land as Thou dost intend it to be; that their hearts may be moved to desire it and to work for it.

We pray for ourselves; that we may be part of the answer to our country's problems and not part of the problem.

That we may have faith and courage to press on, despite criticism and indifference;

That looking towards Thee in all things, and testing our vision by Thy holy purpose, we too may share, however humbly, in the building of Thy Kingdom upon earth.

Hear these our prayers, and the unspoken petitions of our hearts, and answer them, not according to our desiring or deserving, but as Thou in Thy mercy seest to be best. Amen.

Indian Opinion May 13, 1960.

From Indian Messenger,
July 21, 1960.

FROM THE MEMBERGROUPS

GREAT BRITAIN

Prof. F. J. M. Stratton †

With Professor F. J. M. Stratton, who died in Cambridge on September 2 at the age of 79, the world has lost a truly good man. Stratton was an astronomer; for almost 20 years he was Professor of Astrophysics in Cambridge. Instead of trying to give an impossibly brief account of his astronomical investigations, it seems more appropriate in this journal to refer to his important contributions to international scientific co-operation. Perhaps there is no other field in which co-operation has been so effective as in astronomy, where it is most urgently needed, and has been facilitated by the circumstance that political issues have played hardly any role. It was thus natural that Professor Stratton, who was strongly attracted to the cause of international co-operation, was led to give an important part of his life to furthering it. From 1925 to 1935 he was general secretary of the International Astronomical Union. From 1937 till 1952 he held the post of general secretary of the top organization in which all international scientific unions are united: the International Council of Scientific Unions. Loved and highly esteemed, because of his thoroughly unselfish and modest personality, and gifted with an exceptional talent for organizing, he became one of the most respected men in international scientific co-operation and one of those who have contributed most to it. Men whose lives are directed by such true and realistic idealism are rare. The intimate world of his close friends in England, as well as the world-encompassing circle of his scientist friends, will miss him sadly.

Prof. Dr. J. H. Oort.

HUNGARY

„Unitarius Élet" — Unitarian life — is the monthly paper of the Budapest Unitarians. In the issues of this year Prof. Joseph Ferencz

in six consecutive articles gave an account of the history of the Polish Arians in the XVIth and XVIIth century, commemorating the anniversary of the expulsion of Arians — also called Socinians — by the Jesuits. In one of the recent articles the author informed his readers of the life and work of the old stalwart fighter for Liberal Protestantism in Italy: Prof. Dr. Giovanni Pioli, on account of the publication of his new book; and of the consolidation of American Unitarians and Universalists. The periodical contains frequent news about the life of Unitarians in other countries.

ROUMANIA

The Protestant Theological School, having the rank of a University, has united the Lutheran, Calvinist and Unitarian Theological Faculties. Prof. Béla Bende, the vice-rector of the School and professor for the history of religions in the Unitarian faculty, received the degree of a doctor of theology at the June session of the School. All the Lutheran and Calvinist Bishops and a representative of the orthodox Theological School were present. On behalf of the Unitarian Church, Bishop Dr. Alexis Kiss and Prof. Dr. Lajos Kovács greeted the new doctor. The title of his thesis was: "The phenomenology of religion".

Grenville Needham

I.R.F. 1960

This summer the International Religious Fellowship returned to Switzerland for the annual conference, to the Reformierte Heimstätte overlooking the village of Rüdlingen and the Rhine flowing through the rolling countryside near Schaffhausen. In this beautiful situation over 100 of us met and threw ourselves into the usual intensive week of talking and listening, singing, swimming, dancing, and the many activities which annually bind our several nationalities into one community.

Our study was centred on the theme "Where is Technical Progress Leading Us"? (chosen this year to enable the Swiss to show off their natural genius in this field). Professor Hermann Mohler, of Basle University and Research Director for Knorr, saw the progress of mankind leading us to one world- society, making more and more acute the problems of space, of time, and of nourishment. With technical and educational progress we will be capable of going a

great way towards feeding the vast and ever-growing world population. The growth of communications, however, has so drastically altered our old conceptions of space and time that we have hardly realised the effect it has had on all but the most developed cultures. The impact of technical progress on the more backward nations requires much more thought and consideration than it usually receives.

Rev. Joyce Hazlehurst, now minister of one of our Midland Unitarian churches in Britain, looked at the more personal results of our "progress". She saw modern Western man as tending to be "lonely, unimaginative, lacking in purpose, uncreative, and seeking self-realisation through his material possessions". "It is the responsibility of religion and the arts to safeguard the individual personality.. by interpreting the human situation, calling forth emotional response, and making man feel at home in his new universe".

We discussed the subject among ourselves in groups each devoted to just one aspect of the problem. One concerned itself with religion and ethics, another with education and social welfare, another with science, and so on. We realised the problems which face us, living in this age of science, but as religious liberals we were thankful that this is in many ways an enlightened time. And as young people we realised and appreciated the almost limitless opportunities and challenges which this most exiting age offers to us. Few of us would have it otherwise.

Our business went well, with possibilities for new contacts opening up in France, in Czechoslovakia, in Hungary and in Italy. In all our work, worship and recreation we came to know more of the things which make us different one from another, and too often divide us when more than ever we must become one family of Man. Before and after the conference we lived as one family as our paths criss-crossed Europe: American and Britain walked over the Derbyshire hills together; English Rodney called in on German Helmuth; Dutch Suzanne was staying with Swiss Männy; I was drinking Czech wine and talk, talk, talking in Prague; American Jan and Dan were seen walking down London's Oxford Street; our Dutch Secretary had just been married by Rev. Stewart Carter to a member of his Cambridge congregation. It was somehow disturbing to wait with the Americans as their plane was delayed for 13 hours by a massive war defence excercise which grounded civil aircraft over the entire North American continent.

But throughout an IRF summer these different aspects of the world are thrown at one. They are disturbing, and exciting, and puzzling. And ultimately the only certain impression which they seem to leave is that of the impossibility of making any predictions of the next steps the world will take in its real, inevitable, and yet halting "progress".

BOOKNEWS

Buri, Fritz, "Albert Schweitzer's Wahrheit in Anfechtung und Bewährung". Schriften zur Zeit, Heft 23, 47 pp Sw Frs 2,70, Artemis Verlag, Zürich.

Some years ago Fritz Buri wrote in this same series a booklet entitled: "Albert Schweitzer and our time". Now he has written another one about the same subject under the title: "The truth of Albert Schweitzer in temptation and trial. Again Buri gives us a stimulating confrontation with Schweitzer. It is clear, however, that Buri's own standpoint towards Schweitzer has changed. We may not be far from the truth if we say that this booklet takes a "dialectic" position to the Schweitzer which Buri praised so highly in his former paper. It will cause some confusion in the minds of readers of the earlier paper when they see how Buri now apodictically denies many of the theological viewpoints which he defended in his first book.

Cassirer, Ernst, "The Philosophy of the Enlightenment", Beacon Press, Boston, $ 1.45.

This is a paperback edition of the famous work of Cassirer "Die Philosophie der Aufklärung". The book is a real treasure for all those who want information about the important period of the Enlightenment, which is of special interest for the understanding of the development of liberal religious thought.
It is curious to note that whilst in Germany the interest in historical studies is falling behind that in the more dogmatic works, in the United States we see a revived interest in the historical background of our religious thinking. A classic in a nutshell for only $ 1.45!

S. Heath. Citadel, Market and Altar. Emerging Society. Outline of socionomy, the new natural science of society. Baltimore, The Science of Society Foundation, 1957. 259 blz.

This basic, historical and philosophical study of the organization of human society has grown from the author's background as Quaker, lawyer, businessman, inventor and horticulturist. For him creativity is the deepest need of man and he has sought to discover the forms of human organization which unleash creativity in its widest aspects. He proves that true sociality is bound up with the free enterprise system. A list of explanations of terms and an index, help the readers to handle this most provocative book with greater ease.

Bijleveld, Dr W. A., „De Islam als na-christelijke religie", een onderzoek naar de theologische beoordeling van de Islam, in het bijzonder in de XXste eeuw, Den Haag, 1959.

Islam as a post-Christian Religion, an inquiry into the theological evaluation of Islam, especially in the twentieth century (with a summary of the contents in English).

The above is a thesis with which Dr. Bijleveld received his degree. He divided the work into two parts. The first part contains the Christian evaluation of Islam: the radical negative view on Islam and the positive evaluation of Islam as a Religion. Two important questions are raised here: Is Islam a deliberate rejection, or a pardonable misconception of Biblical revelation? The second point is: are Allah and the God-and-Father of Jesus Christ identical? The author sees with regard to this point a difference of opinion between Protestants and Roman Catholics. The latter consider (at least in the main issues) Islam as a not-yet-Christian religion which can eventually be "christianized".

The second part of the book treats Islam itself as a Post-Christian religion. The author comes to the conclusion that it was Mohammed's desire to be looked upon as one of the Prophets, who — together with his followers — should be *included* in the total entity of the peoples of the Scriptures, that is to say Jews and Christians. The central issue at Medina is neither an "emancipation" from Judeo-Christianity, nor a "national-Arabic" exclusivism, but rather an "inclusivism".

The main point of this study is that the actual confrontation of Islam with the Christian preaching is still a matter of the future. Dr. Bijleveld finishes his study by suggesting some practical directives for the Islam-apostolate: communication with Muslims and confrontation with Islam.